

# CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM.]

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."—Paul.

[PAYABLE AT THE END OF SIX MONTHS.]

VOL. III.

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No. 11.

## Evangelical.

### SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS.....No. VII.

"Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people."  
Luke, ii. 10.

Thus spake the celestial messenger, in proclaiming the birth, mediation and triumph of the Prince of Peace, the Saviour of the world. He declared the glorious advent of HIM, in whom all the nations, families and kindreds of the earth were to be blessed, in being turned, every one of them, from their iniquities. In one concise but most comprehensive discourse, this grand Herald from above, exhibited a correct summary of the system of Divine Truth, as preached by the Almighty to the patriarchs and prophets, and by them declared unto the fathers and the people; and which he hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things. The Son suffered, the just for the unjust, and tasted death for every man that he might bring us to God; and when he had by himself, purged our sins, he ascended to heaven, and was seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

If it were proper to speak in the language of our text, with reference to the coming and mission of the merciful Jesus, it cannot be less proper to preach in similar strains, when we contemplate him in his risen and glorified character. And further; if this celestial doctrine when first proclaimed, was conducive to moral and religious improvement, need we doubt its tendency now, if neither misunderstood nor abused? To the nature and moral tendency of the subject under consideration, your candid and prayerful attention is requested.

#### 1. The nature of the doctrine.

The angelic annunciation, recognizes all people as sinners, standing in need of the merciful and gracious mediation of the holy Jesus.—Thus, "Behold there is born unto you a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The same sentiment is announced by another evangelist, in these words—"His name shall be called Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." And that also harmonizes with the positive declaration of Jesus himself;—"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "I came not to condemn the world; but to save the world." And the beloved disciple adds: "We have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." Salvation from sin, then, is the doctrine of the text; and those who pretend to be preachers of righteousness, but force the passage to teach a different sentiment, are, to say the least, chargeable with ignorance or dishonesty, in contradicting the herald-angel—the blessed Jesus and his faithful witnesses.

This doctrine is also declared to be GOOD NEWS. And who can be so blind as not to discover that a denial of this, would argue a friendship for sin and iniquity? Is it not good for sinners to be saved from sin, and become holy and happy? Then the news of their salvation is good tidings. Consider for a moment, my dear friends, what a loud shout of rejoicing is heard from every direction, when the conversion of one, only one Mohometan or Hindostan is declared; and what a mighty parade takes place, at the marvellous goodness of God, in saving one such vile sinner. What! think ye then, the tidings would be less good, if all such obdurate hardened sinners, were to enjoy God's great salvation? The greater the salvation, the greater the manifestation of divine good, or reason is set at defiance. If sin be the common enemy of men, and the cause of their greatest misery, would it not be as good for one sinner as for another, to be saved, and sanctified, and blessed in the Lord?

This heavenly doctrine is as joyful and welcome, as it is good. It is not that kind of joy, which a guilty rebel seems to experience, when, with a heart still in

love with iniquity, he riots in trembling merriment, with a hope of having escaped, what he justly deserved. It is not that forced and unnatural extacy which the pharisee or hypocrite enjoys, when he boasts of having been saved from an endless hell, but retains a corrupt heart which would still indulge in degrading crimes, was he not fearful of being again exposed to similar torture. Neither is it that trifling and sportive gladness, not unfrequently seen among the fashionable votaries to wealth, ambition, pride and vanity, which endures but for a moment, and is at best, a mere counterfeit of real felicity. And very far indeed are the joyous inspirations of the doctrine of truth, from all clamorous and blustering pretensions to happiness, while as yet no deep and realizing sense of the love, mercy and salvation of God, is felt and enjoyed in the understanding.

The joy of which we speak is serious, rational and divine. "Whom having not seen ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." "The kingdom of God is peace, and joy and righteousness in the holy Spirit." And, "There is more joy in heaven, over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons, that need no repentance." Such, my brethren, is the joy and gladness, inspired by a true and living faith in evangelical universalism. In reference to this illustration, examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith.

2. The moral tendency of this doctrine, also, demands your candid attention.

To say nothing of the blasphemy of charging the celestial herald with having preached a doctrine, naturally tending to immorality, we may with great propriety, invite you to an examination of the principles of this system. It teaches that all people are sinners. Does such instructions lead to immorality? This doctrine holds forth sin and unholiness, as the real cause of guilt, condemnation, mental suffering and punishment. But does that truth make men wicked? It boldly maintains that such misery must be endured, so long as the offspring of God remain unhumbled, unsanctified and wicked. And who, from this view of the subject, would be induced to continue sinful, that he might continue to be miserable? Our doctrine also teaches that the God of infinite benevolence sent his Son into the world, to save sinners and make them holy, as an indispensable preparation to their being happy. Will such preaching defeat its own object, and increase unholiness? Does a belief in our own salvation, through the mercy and grace of God, fill us with hatred towards Him, whose very nature is love? If that be the case, then we ought to believe in universal, endless damnation, in order to prevent us from sinning. But if it be allowed that one's believing in Jesus as his own Saviour, is conducive to his reformation and holiness of conduct; but that a conviction of God's equal goodness to others, would provoke his enmity and excite rebellion against his law, do we not represent such an one, as a monster, and not a christian? It argues a deadly hatred, at least towards all those, on account of believing in whose salvation, he becomes immoral and wicked, whereas he would have been otherwise, had their endless damnation been equally as evident. In what light must we view those professors of the christian religion, who openly declare that restraint would at once be removed, and an unrestricted gratification of sinful and corrupt propensities be greedily indulged on their part, were they as fully convinced that God would be finally merciful to all other sinners, as they are, that he has had mercy on themselves, and forgiven their iniquities for Jesus' sake? Such professions of piety are dishonorable to christianity. They indicate a degree of depravity of moral feeling, quite discreditable to human nature. But we have reason to rejoice that such wild speculations, proceed rather from a misapprehension of truth, than from hatred to its celestial principles. Similar errors existed when the Universal Saviour of Jews and Gen-

tiles was proclaiming this doctrine on earth. He was considered a demoralizing preacher. Was accused of opposing the Law, which requires love to God and man, and of holding intercourse with publicans and sinners. It was said, The world is gone after him. But must we infer the licentious tendency of the doctrine of salvation, because it attracts the attention of sinners? A more irrational and unfounded conclusion could not be drawn.

Is it contended that there are some who profess to believe in this angelic universalism, who are really immoral in their conduct, and therefore the doctrine must be licentious? We reply: Are there none of other professions, even of the orthodox nobility who err to an equal extent? Let some champion for that system, mention a sin among our profession, from which theirs is free, and we are silent.

When did universalism lead to the wickedness, which has uniformly disgraced the believers in decreetive endless misery, where they had the power to gratify their wishes? Does our doctrine give rise to inquisitions, burning heretics, hanging Quakers, and branding all unbelievers of our peculiar tenets, with infidelity? But we forbear. Let us, my brethren, obey the golden maxim of Jesus, and do unto others as we would, they should do unto us. And be it remembered, that christian universalists, will ever bear a decided testimony against profanity, dishonesty, intemperance, debauchery and all hypocrisy. All are impostors that practically deny these sacred truths. By their fruits ye shall know them.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

### THE CHRISTIAN OPITULATOR.....No. VIII.

What is the true signification of the word HELL?

We now enter upon the examination of those passages in the New Testament, in which the word hell is found: And as this is predicated upon the Old, we may reasonably expect to find much the same sense attached to this word in the latter, as in the former Scriptures. In fact, it would appear altogether unaccountable to us, if we were to find a meaning to this word in the New Testament, which we have shown is not even intimated in the Old. For, why should not the inhabitants of the earth before Christ be informed of such a place, as many suppose hell to designate, to which they must have been exposed, in common with all others? Why should the fact, that there is such a place, be kept a secret, until since the birth of the Saviour? If we were to look for any new, important revelation, should we not expect, from the known character and office of Christ, that it would be of a nature more glorious and benevolent? Would the "mediator of a new and better covenant" bring tidings of woe to mankind? It is true, however, that certain passages in the New Testament, not having so literal a signification as is generally preserved in the Old, have given to the superstitious and designing, some opportunity of dressing the subject as should best suit their wishes. This seeming countenance comes from the more frequent and figurative use of the word *gehenna*, the valley of Hinnom or the place of perpetual sacrifice to Moloch.

The first text is found in Matt. v. 22, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, raca, (the meaning of which is "vain fellow,") shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say "thou fool," shall be in danger of hell fire." The first thing which we request every one to attend to, after reading the texts quoted, is to examine critically and decide in his own mind, whether, any thing connected with the word "hell" is a plain description of it as a place in the eternal world, where the "finally impenitent" will suffer forever in flames of brimstone? Do you find any thing in this text which proves the hell therein named, to mean such a place? All that is said is, that they "shall be in danger of hell fire," but it does not determine, where that fire is, or how long it



is to burn. Now, it is natural to inquire, if a person is in danger of being endlessly miserable, *merely for calling his brother a fool?* Where, on this supposition, is the established proportion between crimes and punishment? If to call a brother a vain fellow, exposed a man only to the scrutiny of the legal council, what proportion is there in dooming him to eternal tortures, after he shall have paid the debt of nature, for calling his brother a fool? Is it so much worse then to call a brother a fool, than to call him a vain fellow? We think we must look for a more reasonable conclusion than this. The original understanding was this: According to an established law of the land, he who offended by calling his brother a vain fellow, was in danger of being apprehended by the city council: But whosoever should call his brother a fool was in danger of being considered a criminal, and of being sentenced to pass through the fire of *gehenna* to Moloch, which punishment was generally executed upon criminals.

Matt. v. 29, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee cut it off," &c. See also chap. xviii. 9. It must, we think, be obvious to every observer, that the language here employed is highly *figurative*; for no one we presume would contend that casting away a *literal* eye or hand, would save a person from a *literal* eternal hell. In order to be consistent therefore, we shall contend that neither the members nor the hell are literal, but that both are alike figurative. As the eye discovers objects, and the hand forthwith seizes upon them; so our vain curiosity often pries inquisitively into affairs, often not our own, and our ambition grasps at objects, which instead of concerning our peace and happiness, generally beget to ourselves additional care and disquiet. It is profitable therefore, that we be content to act within our own sphere, even at the sacrifice of thwarting our desires, rather than to aim at new and useless acquisitions, which instead of bringing satisfaction, create anxiety and disgust. And it becomes us also, to look about us and see how many supernumerary acquisitions we have to engage our attention, from the simple discharge of our duty. Such as we discover, it is profitable for us to abandon, that we may be left to the enjoyment of more pure and substantial joys. Such an exegesis is, we are confident, far more consistent with this text, than to suppose it to be altogether literal, so that a hand or an eye can so offend as to require amputation or extraction, in order that after death, and after the resurrection too, (when bone must come to its bone,) a *part of the body* may be made the "redeemed of the Lord."

Matt. x. 28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." See also Luke x. 15, the same. We shall readily admit here, what the text so evidently asserts, that "God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." But our objection to the general understanding, will be that the word hell (*gehenna*) does not mean a place of fire in eternity, which everlastingly exists for the designed purpose of tormenting eternally the spirits of men. We say the very face of the passage gives contradiction to such an idea. It says "God is able to destroy both soul and body." Now admitting for the sake of argument, that because God is able he therefore *will* destroy the soul; does it require a place of eternal fire *after* the soul and body are destroyed? Certainly not. In order to have it agree with the common notion, it should read thus:—"God is not only able, but he *will* (not destroy the soul but) *keep* it in eternal existence in everlasting burnings." This would have given no room for doubt. But remark the language: "God is able to destroy both soul and body," no matter where, whether in a never-ending fire, in the grave, or in the fire of *gehenna*, the valley of Hinnom. Notice the comparison made in the passage. Man is able to destroy, i. e. *take away the existence* of the body; God is able to destroy not only the body, but also to destroy, i. e. *take away the existence* of the soul. There is no intimation of a never-ending life of misery made here. We do maintain that to *destroy* never can mean to *perpetuate existence*, either in

happiness or in misery. The obvious meaning is this: Fear not man so much, who, by committing your body to the flames of *gehenna*, can deprive it of existence; but rather fear him who is able, while man destroys your body, to take away the existence of your soul also. The text, so far from proving hell to be a place of eternal torment, might, more plausibly seem to prove it to be a state of dark annihilation. But this it does not prove, any more than it does the former unscriptural doctrine. Whatever the text prove beside, it can never prove annihilation. It can never prove that, "at the resurrection" all will not be made *alive* in Christ, that "all will not be changed and put on immortality." It can never prove that the grave shall have the victory, or that the sting of death (which is sin the cause of misery) shall not be taken away; and that the effect, flowing always from the cause, shall continue to be!

Because God is able to destroy, it is not proved that he *will*. Remark friendly reader, God's power is here intimated and not his determination. But perhaps some, not calculating on this suggestion, will object. But let us ask if there are not numerous passages in the scriptures, which speak of God's power to do, what he never did and never will perform? "God," says the Evangelist, "is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Does this prove that he did or will do this? Christ was said to be able to command twelve legions of angels to save him from the murderous fury of his enemies; but does this prove that he did do it? He gave his apostles power to say to this mountain, "be thou removed into the sea," and it should be obedient. Yet we have no evidence that they ever exercised the power. So God is able to destroy both soul and body. But as we before remarked, it does not prove he *will* do it. Now we know that God is able to destroy the souls and bodies of all men, but it is his *will* to have all men saved, and he is able to execute his will, and "will do all his pleasure."

ORIGEN.

## Doctrinal.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

### INFINITY OF SIN.

MR. EDITOR—In a former number, I promised something further on the subject of the infinity of sin. My present remarks will relate to some support, which the scriptures are supposed to afford to the truth of this strange tenet. It is certainly incumbent on the believer in revelation, to establish the truth of every point of doctrine, at least, every point on which he lays much stress, by clear proof from the divine word. This is given as "a lamp to our path, and a light to our feet," and where it leads, we may safely follow, and where it rests we may safely stop. Any article, in the numerous divisions and subdivisions of doctrine of piety or morality, to which the scriptures but indirectly allude, or on which they are totally silent, ought not to be deemed very essential to the christian faith or practice. Though true in itself, and possessing some relative importance, its reception or rejection cannot, with propriety, be supposed to have much influence upon our present welfare or our future destination. If the doctrine of the infinity of sin be true, and if as many suppose, it be a fundamental article in the scheme of christianity, we may reasonably expect to find it distinctly and unequivocally asserted in the oracles of truth. If it possess half the importance which modern system-makers have attached to it, we may unquestionably find it stated, both in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, not only frequently, but with a plainness which renders it intelligible to every capacity. The infinitely wise and benevolent God, certainly would not, in his word, touch but carelessly, or be totally silent on an infinite subject intimately affecting his own glory, and the endless good of his intelligent creation. Such a procedure would be a stigma on the divine character which neither time nor eternity could efface. But my readers have doubtless consulted their bibles with some diligence and care, and can any one of them recollect any number of passages, which contain a, "Thus saith the Lord," in proof of the proper infinity of sin? I

have made the scriptures my principal study for almost twenty years, and I solemnly declare that I can no where find this sentiment inculcated. A perfect safety therefore, is felt in rejecting it as altogether false and unscriptural. In this entire and open rejection, I am not under the least apprehension of irreverence to God, or of injury to man. This doctrine never has, and never can shed a single ray upon the infinite loveliness of Jehovah. It never has, and it never can advance, in the least degree, the moral interests of the human race. "It is good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." But still, the wisdom of this world has attached so much importance to it, that I should be willing to examine every passage of scripture, which is adduced in support of this senseless tradition; but I recollect only one, which has been quoted with much assurance. This is Job, 22—5. "Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquities infinite?" I was not a little amused awhile since, with the triumphant air of an orthodox clergyman in quoting this passage, as direct and plenary proof of "the infinite evil of sin." He supposed the point proved beyond the power of contradiction, and appeared to be almost as much delighted as a saint would in contemplating the infinite purity and glory of his Maker. Repeating the text with peculiar emphasis, and flourishing his hand rhetorically, he asked with the assurance of one, who had completely vanquished his antagonist, "What now will the opposer of this doctrine say? Will he have the effrontery to contradict the Almighty? to give God the lie direct? He says, in this portion of his word, that sin is infinite, and will any one have the hardihood to say it is not?" But candid reader, this watchman had eyes that did not see correctly, or a heart which did not understand what he read. God does not say, in this passage, that sin is infinite. Please to open your bible, and read with attention. "Is not thy wickedness great?" We admit that this interrogatory has the nature and force of a positive declaration. But then Eliphaz does not say, that Job's wickedness, or sin, if you prefer the term, is infinite. He says it is great. Are great and infinite synonymous terms? Certainly they are not. Job's sin might be great, a second person's greater than his, another's greatest of the three, and still all of them might be immeasurably less than infinite. But it may be said that the last clause of the passage comes directly to the point, "And thine iniquities infinite?" Here however, the word is *iniquities* in the plural, and the term *infinite* relates to the number, not to the degree of them. His iniquities are said to be numerically infinite, not substantially so. Eliphaz refers Job to a variety of instances, as proof of the multitude of his transgressions. "For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withheld bread from the hungry. Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken. And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the thick cloud?" These cases are enumerated by Eliphaz, as a specimen of the manifold transgressions of Job, and no one can help perceiving that the word *infinite* applies to the number and not to the magnitude of them. It is used instead of numerous or manifold. From this brief examination of the passage, it is evident beyond all reasonable doubt, that it affords not the shadow of evidence to the truth of the infinitude of sin, or the consequent doctrine of eternal torment. The advocates of orthodoxy must find better proof than this passage affords, or they will certainly fail in their attempts to prove that sin is equal to their Maker, and equal it surely is, provided it is infinite.

But with the reflecting and candid, a text which is used by the sacred writer to designate the number of Job's transgressions, will weigh nothing when adduced to prove the infinity of moral evil. I have already said more upon this subject than was intended in the beginning of these remarks, but it ought further to be observed perhaps, that the word *infinite* in the passage we are examining, is not used according to its strict lexicographical signification. The expression is hyperbolic; but is not an uncommon way of writing or speaking. How often, both in writing and in conversation, do we meet with the phrases, "infinite pleasure," "infinite pain," and where nothing more is



intended than that one event will afford *great* pleasure and another *great* pain? But we are in no danger of misunderstanding the import of such expressions. No one thinks of inferring the doctrine of proper infinitude from them. The inspired writers take the same liberty with language. Whoever has examined the scripture with the attention which their importance demands, well knows that the same word is used in a variety of senses. In numberless instances, we determine the import of an expression, not so much by its strict etymological meaning, as by the nature of the subject to which it is applied. Was the word infinite, in the passage under consideration, applied to the *degree*, instead of the *number* of iniquities of which Job was supposed to be guilty, it would not necessarily follow that sin, strictly speaking, is *infinite*. We know the word infinite, in the scriptures, is used in a restrained sense. In Nahum iii. 9, it is said, "Ethiopia and Egypt were her *strength*, and it was *infinite*." Who ever thought of quoting this passage to prove that the power of Egypt and Ethiopia, was, properly speaking, unlimited? We may adduce Nahum ii. 9, as another instance. The phrase, "none end," might have been translated, infinite. But no one supposes that the treasures of Nineveh were, in strict propriety of speech, "without end." They were *great*, but not properly speaking, *infinite*. But enough has been said to convince the unbiassed reader that sin, tho' great, is a finite evil. It may be overcome. It will be overcome, for "help is laid on One that is mighty, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins." We know that "Christ the Saviour of the world was manifested to take away our sins," and he will "finish the work which the Father sent him to do." "He will subdue our iniquities." Let the captives of iniquity, therefore, remember that they are still "prisoners of hope, and flee to the strong hold." Let them speedily enlist under the banner of "the Captain of Salvation." "He will save his people from their sins." Let every sinner determine, by the grace of his Redeemer, immediately to break his fetters, to burst the cords which have held him in servitude, and go "leaping and praising from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Believe not the disheartening, though groundless story of the infinity of your bands; but "let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him turn unto the Lord, for he will have mercy upon him, and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon." S. S.

## CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

PORTLAND, SATURDAY, OCT. 11, 1823.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

## BEWARE OF IMPOSTORS.

As a watchman on the walls of Zion, it becomes our bounden duty, to expose, and proclaim to the world, those instances of gross and degrading dissimulation and imposture, which we discover in self-styled Orthodox religionists. But we hope it will be distinctly understood, that in the discharge of this painful duty, we do not mean to include any of that profession, except those, who instigate or countenance, the low and contemptible artifices and intrigues, against which we stand forth, arrayed in the panoply of justice and truth. Such Calvinist Christians as are friendly to religious toleration and free discussion, and would, unless unwarily deceived, discountenance the conduct of the clerical dealers in religious forgery, and spurn upon those counterfeit Sermons or Tracts, which are issued from presses, devoted to theological purposes, do not, by any means, come under the severity of these animadversions. We allude to the authors, venders, distributors and patrons of the vile and unclean productions of modern priestcraft and dishonesty. In our last, we detected the weak and clumsy attempt to deceive, in the reported case of the State-Prison-hypocrite, who was said to have professed to be a Universalist, while he was at heart, a real brother of the modern "evangelicals." Painful as the task is, we must now expose a religious combination of impostors, whose pious frauds are as much beneath that clerical abortion, as high-handed swindling and forgery are more criminal, than fashionable-tattling. We allude to the circulation of certain pamphlets or tracts, first published at Portsmouth, (N. H.) entitled "The Doctrine of Universal Salvation, &c. in a Sermon delivered at Newburyport, Dec. 25, 1823. By a Doctor of the Sect." (of Calvinists, as it should have been added.) Being held in utter contempt by most professors of religion, of every denomination in the place, the infamous image of its author and admirers, would have been left unnoticed, had it not been revised, altered and enlarged, and presented in a form less abhorrent to every sense of civility, decency and honesty.

But the wretched offspring of shameful pedigree was not permitted to perish in hapless orphanage. It is the darling *foundling* of a "Theological Seminary," not a world's distance from Newburyport, and has been carefully nursed and piously educated, as the adopted illegitimate of a "daughter of the Mother of harlots."

Having compared the Tract or sermon, now before us, entitled, "Good Tidings of Great Joy: Or the Doctrine of Universal Salvation" &c. with pamphlets from the Press of the "New-England Tract Society," we have no doubt but it was issued from thence, and was revised and altered "by a Doctor of the Sect" of modern Calvinists. Happy should we be, in being authorized to inform the public to the contrary. But the style and composition in which it now appears, especially in the additions to the original, bear a striking resemblance to the writings of a famous Controversialist, who has written of late, against Unitarians. If the miserable burlesque upon the angelic proclamation, was revised and altered by some of the Professor's accurate imitators, he can authorize us to declare it to the world. Pitiably ignominious must that man, or number of men, be considered, who, for want of solid arguments against the doctrine of the angel of God,—"Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of Great Joy, which shall be unto ALL PEOPLE," descend to write and publish, or re-compose and amend, such gibberish and ribaldry, with a design of bringing the doctrine into disrepute.

How humiliating it is to believe, that *bipeds*, having the faces of men, are busily engaged in distributing that orthodox production, as though it was preached by a Universalist. Yea, how extremely so is it to learn, that men, professing "to seek the salvation of souls"—having the "Cause of missions near their heart"—travelling through the State and country to distribute useful and evangelical tracts and pamphlets—praying and exhorting with the external sanctity of the Jesuits, are *imposing* upon the superstitious and uninformed, these miserable counterfeits of all which is good, to poison their feelings yet more, against a doctrine, of which both are wholly ignorant. When we consider that these travelling impostors and venders of forgeries, know that the pretended Sermon was not written by a Universalist, but by one of their own Sect—that nothing like it can be found in those numerous sermons and publications which are extant—that their exertions are of a worse description than to be passing counterfeit bank notes—that whoever would distribute the former, would, if they could do it with equal impunity, pass the latter—that they are practising the lowest deceptions under a cloak of religion, to injure those, whose doctrine they dare not openly controvert, in what character do they appear, and how should they be treated?

Our friends are requested to take the names of those missionary impostors and others, who distribute that sacrilegious Tractor sermon, that they may be published to the world, and receive their reward—UNMINGLED CONTEMPT.

Mr. STREETER—I have noticed that the 8th verse of the 2d Psalm, is frequently quoted by Universalist writers, as affording evidence of the truth of their doctrine. But my neighbors are unwilling to admit the conclusion which is generally drawn from the text, because the very next verse, seems to teach a different sentiment. Thus, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." So far, all will allow, the inspired Psalmist appears to favor universal salvation. But then, what shall we do with the next verse? viz. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Does not the last assertion, as fully imply the final destruction or misery of some of the heathen, as the other does of the restoration of those who were given to Christ, as his inheritance? If you will offer a few observations, in illustration of the above passages, you will greatly oblige many in this quarter; and, I have no doubt, render yourself useful to most of your attentive readers.

Lewiston, Sept. 1823.

## REPLY.

It is pleasing to learn that our friendly readers, in various places, are willing to hear the objections of unbelievers, and without entering into a violent controversy, which would be likely to end in uncharitableness, submit those difficult and disputable points, to persons whose occupation and opportunities, will render it convenient for them, to discuss and explain them, in a more calm and satisfactory manner. We have several subjects, like the above, upon our table, to which we shall cheerfully attend, as we have leisure. It will afford us much pleasure to attempt plain and convincing solutions of such important questions.

We shall not attempt to prove from the 8th verse of the 2d Psalm, that all mankind are included in the phrases, "heathen, thine inheritance," and "uttermost parts of the earth thy possession;" because it is very probable that the Jews, who were called "God's people," and, as such entitled to the blessings promised through the Messiah, were not particularly intended; nor does the import of the inquiry, render it necessary. No candid inquirer, we may presume will deny the following facts, which are evidently supported by the passage.

1. That the Lord Jesus, of whom it is said, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," is the character who is to inherit the heathen, and possess the uttermost parts of the earth.

2. This giving them to him as an inheritance and possession, relates to his bringing them into a state of willing subjection to his government, as the king upon the holy hill of Zion. In the sense in which Jesus "hath power over all flesh," is "heir of all things," and "hath all things given into his hand," both the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth were his, as much as the Jews. But the Psalmist would be understood that the dominion of the promised Redeemer, was not to be limited to Israel, but should finally extend to the Gentile ends of the earth.

3. It will be agreed on all hands that this benevolent extension of the Saviour's kingdom, was according to the original purpose of God; since it is said, in the preceding verse, "I will declare the decree"—having reference to the dominion of the Son.

4. These facts being granted, we may safely ask the reader to consider, that the same "heathen and uttermost parts of the earth," are to be broken with a rod of iron, and dashed to pieces as a potter's vessel. Thus, (omitting the words printed in italics, which were supplied by the translators,) Ask of me, and I shall give the heathen, thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth, thy possession. Thou shalt break them (the heathen, &c.) with a rod of iron, &c. Now the careful inquirer cannot well avoid seeing, that there is no intimation of the final destruction of some of the heathen, and the restoration of others; because there is no such distinction mentioned. The whole of them are to be broken in pieces, that they may be subdued to Jesus.

The "rod of iron," relates to the power of the Prince of Peace. Their being "broken like a potter's vessel," implies the utter overthrow of all idolatry, cruelty and wickedness, so that they shall no more exist. Hence, when we are told that "the kingdoms of this world, shall become the kingdom of our Lord," we may safely infer the overthrow of these kingdoms. So we should express ourselves in relation to any government or people, however great the advantage they might derive from the change of condition. We should say, the Spanish Inquisition was utterly destroyed, if we knew that the Inquisitors had all become merciful Christians. When the universal triumph of Jesus is set forth by St. Paul, it is said, "He hath put all things under his feet." They must first be abased, that they may be exalted. As all men are called "enemies to God by wicked works," they must be humbled and subdued, before they can see the salvation of God. Therefore, so far from implying the final misery of any, the text fully proves, that Jesus will inherit the heathen, and possess the uttermost parts of the earth, as a triumphant king, on the holy hill of Zion.

## NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

While the Editor tenders his grateful acknowledgments to his subscribers indiscriminately, *peculiar gratitude* is due to those, who have made remittances for the preceding volumes of this work. But as much for the second, and some for the first volume, remains yet unpaid to the Editor, it is conceived to be fair and friendly, to give this timely notice of the regulations which will be made in future.

It will be taken for granted that subscribers who are in arrears for the 1st and 2d volumes, are not able, or not disposed to render us our dues, which are very much needed. Therefore, no papers will be sent them after the 13th number, till arrearages at least, are actually paid. If papers should be discontinued to any who have paid to some Agent, and through mistake or otherwise, has not been paid over to the editor, they shall be continued again, on receiving timely information.

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## POETRY.

## THE MORNING STAR.

"I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star."—Rev. xxii. 16.

BENIGHTED on the troublous main,  
While stormy terrors clothe the sky;  
The trembling voy'ger strives in vain,  
And nought but dark despair is nigh—  
When lo! a gem of peerless light,  
With radiant splendor shines afar;  
And through the clouds of darkest night,  
Appears the bright, and morning Star!

With joy he greets the cheering ray,  
That beams on ocean's weary breast:  
Precursor of a smiling day,  
It lulls his fears to peaceful rest—  
No more in peril doth he roam,  
For night and danger now are far:  
With steady helm he enters home,  
His guide, the bright and morning Star!

Thus when affliction's billows roll,  
And waves of sorrow and of sin,  
Beset the fearful, weeping soul,  
And all is dark and drear within—  
'Tis Jesus whispering strains of peace,  
Drives every doubt and fear afar:  
He bids the raging tempest cease,  
And smiles the bright, and morning Star!

## Polemical.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

## "INFINITY OF SIN."

MR. STREETER—Under the above head, a writer in the last number of your paper, undertakes to combat the proposition it contains. Presuming, from the candor by which you profess to be governed, that you are willing to present your readers with the objections which can be urged against the doctrine of which you are a professed advocate, as well as those which can be adduced in its vindication, I have been induced to send you the following remarks for insertion in the "Intelligencer." It is only by proceeding in this manner, that truth can be discovered or error detected. A publication conducted upon any other principles becomes a vehicle of prejudice and error, rather than of intelligence and truth, and is unworthy the support of a liberal, discriminating, and enlightened public.

Your correspondent prefaces his arguments by several remarks, which, as they consist of bare assertions, without any attempt to prove their correctness, I shall not undertake to controvert. Nothing is more easy than to bestow upon any system, whether religious, moral, or political, the epithets of *absurd*, *unphilosophical*, &c. To the polished Greeks the gospel of Christ was *foolishness*. He then proceeds to state the arguments by which sin is proved to be an infinite evil. He denies the correctness of the conclusions that sin is an infinite evil, because committed against a being of infinite holiness and goodness. But in what manner does he attempt to prove, that this is not, to use his own expression, "a natural conclusion?" By the following examples, which, to say the least, are not very appropriate. "Is it certain," said he, "that a man would be in love with gall, if he did not believe the quantity of it to be infinite?" To this query we may reply that persons are to be found who are "in love with," to use this writer's expression, many things, without reflecting either on the nature of those things, or the consequences which will infallibly result from an attachment to them, and that in support of the truth of this assertion, daily experience furnishes us with many facts. "Is it certain," continues he, "that we are in love with orthodoxy if we believe that the errors and mischiefs which it produces in society are not infinite but limited?" For my own part, Mr. Editor, I must confess that my perception is so dull that I am unable to discover the justice of such a comparison, even on the supposition that "orthodoxy," as your correspondent terms it, actually teems with "mischiefs" of ten times the magnitude he assigns them. It would not thence follow that sin, is not an evil of infinite magnitude, either directly or indirectly.

Let us now inquire what arguments he produces in proof of the correctness of his proposition that sin is not an infinite evil. "It is the transgression of the law by a frail mortal. It is the act of a finite dependant creature, and therefore cannot be infinite." Had your correspondent called to mind a maxim in that "philosophy" of which he professes to possess a knowledge, he would not have drawn the last mentioned conclusion. The maxim to which I refer is the following, viz. that a course of reasoning proving too much, proves, in fact, nothing. Now if sin cannot be an *infinite evil*, because committed by a finite being, it certainly cannot be a *finite evil*, because committed against an infinite being. We are not, therefore, as certain of the correctness of your correspondent's conclusion as "that an ounce does not weigh a ton, or that two and two are not a thousand."

Your correspondent concludes his remarks by laying down the following propositions, which, from the confidence with which he advances them, one would suppose that he considered them unanswerable. To the *first* of those propositions, a reply has been already made. A further reply to it will also be attempted by your permission in a future paper. To the *second*, that "sin is not infinite, because exceeded by grace," in support of which the words of an apostle are cited, "Where sin abounded, grace might much more abound," I would reply, that the inspired writer, in the foregoing passage, speaks of the *extension* of sin, and not of its *nature*, and is, therefore, cited to no purpose. The apostle refers to one subject, "S. S." to another. His *third* proposition, is, I confess, one of the most plausible arguments I ever saw advanced, in support of the doctrine he defends. Formidable as is this objection, it is not, however, insuperable. "Sin is not infinite because it can be effectually done away. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." But, before he advanced the above proposition, he should have considered in what sense sin is said to be an infinite evil. He should have recollected another maxim in philosophy, that an action may be one thing in itself, and another by accident. Sin is not, it is granted, an infinite evil in itself, because it must in that case be an *eternal* evil, and must therefore always exist. For infinity involves eternity. But though sin, may not be, in itself, an evil of an infinite nature, it may be, and actually is such by the circumstance of its being committed against an infinitely wise and holy being, whom all are bound to love, fear, honor and obey.

If Mr. Editor, to the foregoing remarks, any reply should be made, which may furnish a fair and solid refutation of the arguments they contain, I trust you will find that I am open to conviction, and am ready to retract any mistakes into which I may have fallen, should sufficient evidence be produced in proof that my present impressions are erroneous.

I am, Mr. Editor, your obed't servant, T.

## Morality.

## SLANDER.

In that class of vices, which are supposed to be of a lighter shade, and not within the circle of legal crimes, there are many which have a most mischievous influence on society, because they are *little* offences. Acts of open and daring enormity, which violate defined rights, fall under the scourge of the law, and the rebukes of the pulpit. But there are a multitude of the former grade, which are too slippery for the grasp of justice, and seem to be deemed "beneath the gravity of the sacred desk." These can be repressed only by the influence of public opinion, and that healthy tone of moral feeling, which gives life and sanction to the laws of decorum.

In this class of vices, there is perhaps no one, which indicates so foul a purpose, and sheds so much misery upon society, as *SLANDER*; and though it makes a title in the civil code, it is indeed little else but a title; for its supposed insignificance, and its *Protean* nature, give it an almost total impunity. This offence betrays a malignity and turpitude of heart, which throws a peculiarly mean and odious species of guilt upon its authors. The *slanderer* has not only no excuse, but no pretext. For most other

vices, some miserable inducement may be conjectured. The drunkard is urged to his fatal potations to slake a thirst, which long habit has made tormenting. The profane pour out curses to give spirit and emphasis to the stale and vapid jargon of an empty head. The thief pleads necessity. But the backbiter is stripped of all pretext, which would not aggravate his guilt. He cannot plead even the base purpose of revenge; for he does not confine his attacks to his *enemies*. Nor does he select the low and worthless character. Slander *cannot* fasten upon guilt, and *will not*, on simple worthlessness. Merit is its chosen prey. The more pure and elevated the reputation, the deeper is its shaft dipped in poison, and the more distinct is its deadly aim.

Slander is also a coward vice. The backbiter is an assassin. He attacks his victim in the rear—in the dark, defenceless. He strikes a blow, which can neither be parried or repelled. The arrow of scandal, which wounds wherever it flies; which pierces the heart, and drinks the life blood; is shot from a hiding place; and the malignant archer has burrowed too deep to be ferreted from his covert. What doom would be severe for the wretch, who should lurk in ambush, to hurl poisoned darts at random upon a multitude? We startle at the mention of a deed so diabolical, and a spontaneous curse thrills through the soul. Yet what dart is so poisonous, so fatal, so pathless, as that of defamation? Let him who enjoys an untarnished reputation, measure its value and fix its price, and say what on earth is its equivalent. Gold is indeed "trash in comparison." Without it, the world is a waste and existence a burden. Nothing but the sting of conscious guilt can plant so keen a pang in the heart as the stigma of it, and the courage that can dare the cannon's mouth, shrinks at the finger of public scorn. The heart of an honorable man despoiled of a treasure so priceless is "a living and gushing fountain of agony." He feels more than the bitterness of death, without the mercy that death brings to the wretched. Life is a load he would gladly lay down; the grave a refuge, where he would rejoice to hide his sorrows. What must be the slanderer's motive for inflicting this deadly wound? There is but one—a motive low as perdition—foul as guilt—black as despair. *It is fiend-like to rejoice in another's wo.*—Salem Gaz.

## AN EXTRACT.

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."

By the kingdom of God in the text we understand the gospel. The coming of their Messiah in the prophecies and traditions of the Jews, was denominated the kingdom of God. It was expected that he would assume the character of an earthly prince. Although the dispensation, which Jesus introduced, was entirely different from their anticipations, yet he adopts the language of the times, and speaks of his religion as the kingdom of God. This language was appropriate; because the gospel promulgates the laws of God, and claims obedience to him as the only sovereign. When Jesus then asserts, that the kingdom of God is within mankind, he means that the authority which his religion aims to establish, is not over persons, but the hearts of men; to enlighten the understanding; to scatter the darkness of error and superstition; to mould the temper into benevolence, and to establish in the heart the reign of truth and holiness. And when he adds, that his kingdom cometh not with observation, he intends only, that the progress of his religion, in other words the progress of truth and virtue, will be silent, gradual, and often unperceived; and that it will not extend itself, like the kingdoms of the world, with parade, and noise, and external distinctions. These traits in the character of religion deserve attention.—

Colman's Sermons.

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